

I have been a licensed amateur radio operator since 1965, and have worked as a broadcast engineer for over 40 years. Due to the FCC's lack of enforcement of their own rules (part 15 and 18 emission limits), the noise floor has climbed during the past 50 years. When I worked for Wyoming Public TV, DISH network was unable to receive a usable off-air picture for any Casper TV station at their off-air ingest location, and all of the TV stations had to deliver a signal to DISH by fiber or microwave. The DISH ingest location is line of sight to the TV towers on Casper Mountain, but it is approximately 1500 feet from a PacifiCorp substation. The noise emissions from that substation clearly exceed FCC limits, and rendered reception of a TASSO 1 signal from any TV station on Casper Mountain impossible. After much difficulty, I tracked down a PacifiCorp communications tech in their Casper office, and complained about the noise problem. He said he had no equipment to measure it, and would have to contact other company offices to locate measurement equipment. After several months and no reduction in the noise floor problem, I called the PacifiCorp communication tech again, and he said that the company (this is one of the largest electric companies in the west) only owned one RF test set, and they couldn't locate it.

This is not just an issue with PacifiCorp in Casper. I live in Thermopolis, Wyoming and up until 5 years ago, the noise floor at my house on the HF amateur radio bands was an S2 to S3, and HF communications were possible. Since then, the noise floor has risen to S9, making HF communications impossible. This prohibits my participation in amateur radio emergency communication nets.

The noise floor from poorly maintained electric utility equipment is so high, in many locations in central Wyoming you are unable to receive KTWO-AM, which is a 50 kw clear channel station that is also the PEP (primary entry point) EAS station in Wyoming. This situation puts the general public at risk in an emergency, since they may not live in an area covered by a LP-1 or LP-2, and have to rely on getting emergency information from the PEP.

The FCC should require all electric utilities to have a published number for interference reporting, and should require all utilities to respond and repair defective equipment within 3 days.

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